

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Monday, April 21, 2025 at 5:15 p.m., Maple Room

Members Present: Lisa Rasmussen (C), Lou Larson (VC), Becky McElhaney, Sarah Watson, Carol Lukens

Others Present: Kaitlyn Bernarde, Matthew Barnes, Jamie Polley, Anne Jacobson, Tracy Durante

Noting the presence of a quorum Chairperson Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 5:17 p.m.

Approve minutes of previous meeting (02/07/2025) (03/17/2025) (03/27/2025).

Motion by Watson, seconded by Lukens, to approve. Motion carried 5-0.

Consider approval or denial of various license applications.

Rasmussen stated that Krystin Vollmer and Tyasia Payton, applicants for New Bartender/Operator License, had previously been recommended for denial and that due to the evidence of rehabilitation provided and reviewed by the Chief of Police, the approval for Vollmer and Payton was recommended.

Motion by Larson, seconded by Lukens, to approve or deny licenses as recommended by staff. Motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action regarding a letter of concern for abandonment of premises at Jalapenos of Wausau LLC, 300 N 3rd St, L01, Wausau, WI 54403.

Rasmussen stated that no action was needed any longer as the alcohol license for this establishment had been conditionally surrendered.

Discussion and possible action granting request for a 90 day extension to open for business for good cause for Day's Bowl-A-Dome Inc., owner Dean Day, d.b.a. Day's Bowl-A-Dome, 1715 Stewart Avenue.

Motion by Larson, seconded by Watson, to approve the extension. Motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action approving amendments to special event policy and application, implementing \$1.00 Public Safety Fee.

Rasmussen stated there was concern on how the policy was currently drafted as the fee would still be collected when the event did not occur. It was further stated this would provide clarity for organizers of special events.

McElhaney stated it needed to be clear that the fee would not be collected when a special event did not occur as the police and fire services were not needed thus the funds for those services were not needed.

Rasmussen stated that large organizers of special events could get insurance if an event did not occur, but smaller organizers would not have that same ability. It was stated this would be more equitable to the smaller organizers.

Watson questioned if there was a timeframe for cancellation of an event because if an event was cancelled on short notice, the police and fire services would have already been planned, organized, and expended. It was questioned if the policy could be reworded to make it clear the fee would not be collected if it was later determined the services were not needed or the event was cancelled.

McElhaney stated that rewording should make it clear that the fee would not be collected if it was later determined the services were not needed and the event was cancelled, instead of "or the event was cancelled," within the policy.

Motion by Watson, seconded by McElhaney, to approve this policy as adjusted on the committee floor. Motion carried 5-0.

Discussion and possible action amending Wausau Municipal Code s. 9.20.050 Personal conduct and nuisance and creating Wausau Municipal Code s. 9.20.055 Intoxicants in public parks.

Rasmussen stated this was meant to allow the Parks and Recreation Department to host pop-up beer gardens at events or at park facilities. It was stated that if this ordinance was approved, there would be a sunset within a year to assess if the endeavor was successful or not.

McElhaney stated opposition as there was already an alcohol issue within the community. It was further stated that alcohol was already prohibited within city parks during certain time periods and this may enhance an existing issue.

Rasmussen stated that many special events and local organizations obtain Temporary Class B Picnic licenses mostly without incident at public parks. It was stated the regulations in place to ensure compliance with alcohol laws and the work of the police department show that negative impacts can be limited.

McElhaney questioned the ability for city staff to serve and dispense alcohol. It was stated that the revenue from selling alcohol would be allocated for staff time for this endeavor. McElhaney stated opposition to city staff selling alcohol with a pervasive alcohol culture.

Rasmussen stated the location of the pop-up beer gardens must be taken into consideration as to not impact local bars and other businesses.

Watson stated that sunseting the ordinance could make it easier to implement the endeavor on a trial basis.

Lukens stated concerns with the message that would be sent to the community with the city raising revenue on alcohol.

Motion by Larson, seconded by Lukens, to move forward the ordinance with a sunset date of November 1, 2025. Motion carried 3-2, with McElhaney and Lukens opposed.

Wausau Fire Department Quarter 1 2025 Report.

Report placed on file.

Wausau Police Department Quarter 1 2025 Operations Report.

Report placed on file.

Tavern Activities Report - March 1 - March 31, 2025.

Rasmussen requested that city staff in the police department have a discussion with local establishments and industry organizations to train establishment owners and bartenders on relevant alcohol laws.

Report placed on file.

Community Outreach Update.

Rasmussen requested a special meeting of the common council, if needed, to approve the operation of an emergency homeless shelter operated by the Wausau Police Department with funding from the city and Marathon County.

Report placed on file.

Adjourn

Motion by Watson, seconded by Larson, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.